THE Good old Way AND TRUTH

Which the Ancient Christians many Ages and Generations ago witnessed unto in the World from Age to Age; even from the dayes of Christ unto this very time, wherein the same Doctrine, Life and Practice is witnessed unto by us who are in contempt called *Quakers*, through many Tribulations.

Which our Ancestors, the most ancient and true Christians that ever were upon the Earth, sealed unto, with the loss of their Lives and Liberties.

By which, in short, is fully manifested, in what is treated of herein, that the Doctrine of the *Quakers*, in denying to Swear any Oath, and their refusing to pay Tythes, and many other things they practise, was the Doctrine and practise of the most Famous and renowned Christians, both testified of in the Scriptures of Truth, and the Books of Martyrs.

Also, A brief Discovery of the Ground and Rise of Tythes; manifesting them no Gospel-Maintenance; but was testified against by the Best and most Ancient Christians many Ages ago.

Written by a Branch sprung from the Ancient Stock of David, *which hath long been compassed about with wild Beasts; but through the tender Mercies of the Lord yet remains alive, whose earthly name is*

Ambros Rigge.

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TO THE READER.

OH, Let not prejudice possess thy mind in reading this small Treatise, for then thou wilt reap no benefit thereby; but let thy eye be single to the Truth herein expressed, and thy whole body shall be full of Light; for God never respected mens persons in manifesting his firm and ancient Truth, and Mysteries of Life, which were ever hid from the wise and prudent of the World, as it is at this day; yet not so hid, but that it is universally tendred to all without respect of persons, even from the King upon the Throne, unto the Begger upon the Dunghil; and therefore is mans destruction of himself, as God said to *Israel*; because man hath so much dependancy upon his own wisdom, and natural gifts and parts, that the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness unto him, as they were to the Rulers and chief Priests of the *Jews* in the dayes of old, whom Christ called *Blind-Guides*, though they had natural learning enough, as *Pilate* who crucified Christ, had *Latine*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*,

which any natural man may have, who doth not know the things of the Spirit of God, *because they are spiritually discerned*: Oh, therefore, lean not upon thy natural wisdom, for it will prove a broken Reed in the Day of the Lord, which hasteneth; but receive and obey the Manifestation of the Spirit of God, which he in infinite Love hath given thee to profit withal; for that is the Talent that he will assuredly require of thee, with advantage, and happy for ever are they who can give an account of the improvement thereof.

A. R.

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The Good Old Way, &c.

IN every Age and Generation of the World since man had a being upon the Earth, God had a Seed, either invisible in being, or visible in manifestation, by and thorow which he manifested himself in his own way, time and manner, according to the good pleasure of his Heavenly Will; which Way and manner, in every Age of the World, since sin entred into the World, was contrary to the will and way of Mankind in the Fall; and therefore were they in whom God brought forth his Seed in all Ages, to give testimony in the World unto his Eternal Name and Truth, persecuted, and made a prey upon by the earthly powers, who was not acquainted with these secrets of the Lord, which was ever hid from the wise and prudent of the World; and therefore did the Jews and chief Priests with the Scribes agree together to Crucifie the Lord of Life, and after them many Heathen Emperors rose up against his Members, and destroyed many thousands of them for the Testimony of Jesus and Word of God, as both the Scriptures of Truth, and the Histories of the Ancient Christians, which immediately succeeded the Apostles, doth largely and plentifully witness, testifie and declare; so that since Man's Fall, *He that was born after the Flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit*, Gal. 4. 29. even as it is manifest at this day, for the *Enmity* yet remaineth *between the Seed of the Serpent, and the Seed of the Woman*, Gen. 3. 15. and so will continue until the desolution of all things.

Now in the 11th Moneth in the Year 166$\frac{2}{3}$ did the Word of the Lord come unto me, Saying, *Write, and give a Testimony for my Name thereby, and spread it amongst those who have multiplied thine, and many others Sufferings, for my Name and Testimony, these several years last past, that they may all be left without excuse when I call them before my Judgement Seat, to give an account of the deeds done in their Bodies, who have not yet repented of their evil, but in secret have vindicated themselves, as that they have done no service in persecuting*

them whom I have sent to be Witnesses for my Name and Truth in the Earth.

These Words lay upon my spirit the most part of the aforesaid Moneth, being willing to wait upon the Lord, that he might further manifest his Will and Mind unto me, what I should write, rather chusing to continue in silence many years, then to set Pen to Paper to declare any thing which the Spirit of Truth would not seal unto; which burden of the Word of the Lord continued still upon me, till I gave up thereunto: And upon the 21st day of the same Moneth, in the year aforesaid, I begun to write, and the matter that was first laid upon me to write was concerning Swearing at all, for the denial of which, in obedience to the Command of Christ, I had suffered strait and close imprisonment well nigh seven years; besides other great afflictions that have been added to my bonds by the hands of wicked men, in the said time; all which I have been both made able and willing to bear for the Testimony of Jesus and Word of God; not counting my liberty nor life dear unto me, that I might finish my Testimony with joy, being counted worthy not onely to believe, but also to suffer for that ancient Doctrine, Faith and Practice, which the best and most ancient Christians suffered the loss of their Liberties, and most of them their lives for; as hereafter I shall make appear.

And furthermore, it is upon my spirit to give some Testimony against that abominable Oppression of Tythes, under which many groan at this day, it being never any institution of Christ to his Ministers, under the Gospel; nor ever owned by the ancient Christians succeeding them, nor ever claimed as any Gospel right for a thousand years after Christ's dayes, till the midnight of Popery came over the Earth; in the which the several Popes ordered Tythes to be paid to the Mother Church.

To the first, that the Opposers of Gods present Manifestation of this Way and Truth in this our day, (who have magnified themselves against those whom God hath raised in the Power of his Spirit to revive the ancient Testimony of his Servants in the Earth) should flatter themselves in their rigorous proceedings against me, and many others at this day, for our constant obedience to the Command of Christ, having no other thing to charge us withal, but concerning the Law of Christ: Now I say, lest any who hath appeared

peared against us herein, should vindicate themselves by or under colour or pretence of any Scripture given forth, either under the First or Second Covenant, or the Law it self by which they now proceed against us, which was never intended to take hold of the Innocent and let the Guilty go free.

Now under the Law of the First Covenant, while *Israel* stood in Covenant with God, they were commanded to swear by his Name in some Cases, lest they should swear by false Gods and Idols, as was the manner of the Heathens in their dayes; as the *Egyptians* swore by the Life of *Pharaoh*, and after them the *Romans*, by the Life or Fortune of *Cæsar*, which was to neither of them any Command of God, for they then were Enemies to him and his people.

But *Israel* was to Swear by the Living God, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his Name*, Deut. 10. 20.

And in *Leviticus*, this was the Precept to *Israel*, *Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsly, neither lye one to another; neither shall thou profane the Name of thy God; I am the Lord*, Levit. 19. 11, 12.

And in *Numbers*, *If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, and swear an Oath to bind his Soul with a Bond, he shall not break his Word, but do all that proceedeth out of his mouth*, Numb. 30. 2.

Thus *Israel* in their infancy was commanded to swear by the Lord, and to perform their Oaths unto him, by which they bound their Souls both to God, and one unto another, which in its day and time was well-pleasing unto the Lord, they answering his requirings therein; but take notice by the way, *Israel* was but then under the Law of outward observances, which made nothing perfect, and so it became them to swear by the Lord, as it becomes a child to suck; but not a man: for when *Israel* was grown up, (*viz.*) when Christ came, the Oath of God, who fulfilled the Law, and all the Commands therein, as they received him, and grew in Grace, and the knowledge of him, they put away childish things, and testified against all Oathes, and many other things which the Law commanded, as being but typical, and Figures of good things to come, when the Substance of all these things was brought in, *who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*, as he himself testified to them that were zealous for the Law, and dispised him, the Substance of it,

For

For Circumcision was an expreſs Command of God to *Iſrael*, being *Jews* outwardly, *to them and their Seed for an everlaſting Covenant*, Gen. 17. 13. for ſaith God, *The uncircumciſed man-child whoſe fleſh of his foreskin is not circumciſed, that Soul ſhall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my Covenant*, verſ. 14. this had a further and more large extent then Swearing ever had, yet when Chriſt came, *the end of the Law for righteouſneſs ſake to every one that believed*, the Apoſtle told *Iſrael* when they were grown up, *That if they were circumciſed Chriſt would profit them nothing*, Gal. 5. 2. yet might Circumciſion have been more ſtrongly pleaded for, when *Paul* ſpoke to the *Galatians*, being God had commanded it to the *Jews*, and to their Seed for an everlaſting Covenant, which he never did Swearing, neither under the Firſt nor Second Covenant; ſo the *Galatians* had more ground to withſtand *Paul* in crying down Circumciſion, then any hath to withſtand the People of God at this day, for denying Swearing: And under the Goſpel Swearing is more abſolutely denied and forbidden by Chriſt and his Apoſtles then Circumciſion, being, but a little after Chriſt began to Preach to *Iſrael*, under the Second Covenant, by his own mouth, given in ſpecial charge to them then in being, *Not to Swear at all*, Matth. 5. 34, 35, 36, 37. and confirmed by the Apoſtle *James*, *Jam.* 5. 12. and never practiſed after by any of the Diſciples, as was Circumciſion; for *Paul* afterwards circumciſed *Timothy*: Therefore you who are ſo zealous for Swearing; why are not you ſo zealous for Circumciſion, which was more enjoyned in the Scripture then ever Swearing was, and with leſs Authority (under the Goſpel) denied?

Object. *And further, ſome pleads for Swearing, becauſe the holy men of old time did Swear*, (viz.) Abraham, David and Solomon, Joſeph, *&c.*

To which I anſwer, *Moſes*, who gave forth the Law at the Command of God, ſaid unto *Iſrael*, *A Prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe unto you, like unto me, him ſhall ye hear in all things; and it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever will not hear the voice of that Prophet, ſhall be cut off from among the People*, Deut. 18. 18, 19. which Prophet, was Chriſt, the end of the Law; and when God brought him forth into the World, he commanded *Iſrael* to hear him in all things, *Matth.* 17. 5. who ſaid, *Before* Abraham *was I am*; he commanded *Iſrael*, *Not to Swear at all.*

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The ſame Jeſus ſaid, that he was greater then *Solomon*, Mat. 12. 41, 42, and was Davids Lord, and by him God ſpake to *Iſrael*, who was and is to be heard and obeyed in all things; yea, *Whoſoever ſhall break one of the leaſt of his Commandments, and teach men ſo, ſhall be called leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoſoever ſhall do, and teach them, ſhall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 19. by which, all you Swearing Teachers, and Swearers contrary to the poſitive Command of Chriſt and the Apoſtle, without any exception, may read your portion; for they who love Chriſt, both keep his Commandment, and teach others ſo to do.

For where Chriſt intended any exception in changing of the Law, in what it had commanded, he plainly expreſſed it; as in *Matthew*, where it was ſaid that *Moſes* ſuffered a man that would put away his wife *to give her a Writing of Divorcement, &c.* Mat. 5. 31. but ſaith Chriſt, *I ſay unto you, whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, ſaving for the cauſe of Fornication*, verſ. 31. [Mark] ſaving for the cauſe of Fornication; where Chriſt plainly expreſſeth the exception when he intended it: And at the 28th verſe Chriſt expreſſed the exception again when he intended it, *(i. e.) Whoſoever ſhall look upon a woman to luſt after her*, [mark] to luſt after her, *hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*; ſo it is plain, that when Chriſt intended any exception in changing the Law, he did not leave his work imperfect for vain man after him to rectifie.

And immediately after this, in the ſame Chapter, Chriſt poſitively commands, without any exception, his Diſciples and Followers, *Not to ſwear at all; neither by Heaven; neither by the Earth; neither by* Jeruſalem, *nor by the Head, &c.* Mat. 5. 34, 35, 36.

Now here is a plain change of the Law, which commanded *Iſrael* to ſwear by the Lord, by him who had all Power in Heaven and Earth given unto him, *Matth.* 28. 18. that he might rule all Nations with a rod of Iron, who fulfilled the Law under which *Abraham, Solomon, David* and *Joſeph* ſware; ſo is their Swearing no plea for any under the Goſpel to immitate, but the contrary.

But it is objected, *That by thoſe of old time, Chriſt meant the Expoſitors of the Law, who ſaid, If men ſwear Truth, it was no evil; but onely they were not to ſwear to that which was falſe.*

To which is anſwered, that this being an invention of the Ob-

jector, and no where ſo ſaid in the Scripture of Truth; It needs no other anſwer, but a denial; for by them of old time, is ſpoken of them by whom God ſpoke to *Iſrael* under the Law; let the Greek Readers ſpeak if the word therein doth not imply ſo much.

But when *Iſrael* revolted from the Lord in their hearts, and yet kept the Form of Swearing, and ſaid, *The Lord lived*; yet the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſaith, *Though they ſay the Lord liveth, albeit they ſwear falſly*, Jer. 1, 2, and 23. though no truer thing could be ſaid or ſworn unto, then that the Lord lived; yet after they ceaſed to walk with God in his Covenant made with them, but went into Adultery and Deceit, and perverted Judgement, and judged not the cauſe of the Fatherleſs, nor the right of the Widdow; and laſt of all, the wonderful horrible thing was committed in their Land, *Their Prophets propheſied falſly, and their Prieſts bear rule by their means, and they loved to have it ſo; therefore ſaith the Lord, what will ye do in the end thereof?*

So though it was true that the Lord lived, yet he lived not in them who were in the aforeſaid Abominations; they held the Form, but were gone from the Power and Life; and ſo then it was a cuſtomary thing with them to ſwear, even as it is now with the Apoſtate Chriſtians, who are now in the very ſame *Horrible Abominations* of Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing, and committing Adultery, their Prieſts bearing rule by their means, more like lords over Gods Heritage, then any Examples of the Flock, and the people loving to have it ſo; but what will ye do in the end thereof.

But though Iſrael *play the Harlot, yet let not* Judah *ſo offend: But come ye not to* Gilgal, *neither go ye up to* Bethaven, *nor Swear the Lord lives*: And *Amos* ſaith, *They that ſwear by the ſin of* Samaria, *and ſaith, the God of* Dan *liveth, and the manner of* Beerſheba *liveth; even they ſhall fall and never riſe again*, Amos 8. 14. but while *Iſrael* kept Covenant with God, as I ſaid before, they ſwore by the Name of the Lord in Truth and Righteouſneſs; but when they revolted they kept the Form, and ſwore without fear, and prophaned the Name of the Lord, and ſwore by the Heathen, by *Malcam*, and by the ſin of *Samaria*, which was no where warranted to them by God; even as the Apoſtate Chriſtians in our age, ſwear now upon a Book, for which they have not the leaſt colour of Scripture, it being made up of divers Creatures, which was never

never commanded to be ſworn by, either under the Firſt or Second Covenant, but forbidden.

Object. *Again, It is ſaid, the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrews allows of Swearing before a Magiſtrate, in theſe Words,* For men verily ſwear by the greater, and an Oath for confirmation is to them an end of all ſtrife.

Anſw. To which is replyed, that the Apoſtle there ſpoke of men that were in ſtrife, and not of them who had learned of Chriſt, as is very clear and manifeſt from his words, both in that place, and alſo in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, ſaying, *He had fed them with Milk, and not with Meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able. For ye are carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* 1 Cor. 3. 1,2,3. Now theſe are the carnal men that ſwear by the greater, of which *Paul* ſpoke to the *Hebrews*, who were in ſtrife, and ſo had not learned Chriſt, who ends the Law in which the ſtrife is: here *Paul* makes a clear diſtinction to the *Hebrews*, between men in ſtrife and ſwearing, and grown Chriſtians who had learned of Chriſt, and did abide in his Doctrine, in ſaying to the *Hebrews, For men verily ſwear by the greater, &c.* [mark] men in ſtrife, and carnal; not you *Hebrews*: And again, *An Oath for confirmation to them*; [mark] to them, (not to you) *is an end of all ſtrife; For where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work*, Jam. 3. 16.

And there is no more ground given by the Apoſtle for the Saints to ſwear at all, by any Oath, from the words before mentioned, then there is ground from Chriſt's words to the Saints, to exerciſe lordſhip one over another, becauſe he ſaith, *Mark* 10. 42. *The Gentiles do ſo, &c.* Beſides, did not thoſe that uſed ſwearing in thoſe dayes, do it to put an end to all ſtrife? but is not Oathes impoſed at this day where no ſtrife is? nay, are they not impoſed for the beginning of ſtrife? let the Righteous judge how far theſe who would be accounted Goſpel-Profeſſors are fallen, that they are ſhort of the practiſe of thoſe who were carnal, and lived in ſtrife in dayes paſt.

And the Apoſtle *James*, to confirm Chriſt's words, when he ſpoke to his Brethren, who had learned of Chriſt, and come out of the ſtrife, ſaying, *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not, neither*

by Heaven, nor Earth, nor any other Oath; but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation, Jam. 5. 12. This he ſpoke without any exception, as Chriſt had done before to his Diſciples; ſo as it was the perfection of the *Jews* under the Law, not to ſwear falſly; ſo it was the perfection of the Chriſtians under the Goſpel, not to ſwear at all.

Object. *But ſome have ſaid, that it is vain ſwearing that Chriſt, and the Apoſtle* James *forbad, in ordinary communication, and not ſwearing in Courts of Judicature, &c.*

Anſw. If ſo, then Chriſt did no more then what the Law had done before, which is high preſumption againſt God to ſay; for the Law poſſitively forbad all vain and falſe ſwearing whatſoever, though it made nothing perfect; *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that taketh his Name in vain*, Exod. 20. 7. This ſhuts out all vain Swearing, without any exception, before the better Hope was brought in, *Heb.* 7. 19. which was Chriſt in them the hope of glory, *Col.* 1. 27. who was and is the Miniſter of a better Covenant then that which commanded Swearing, which was eſtabliſhed upon better Promiſes, *Heb.* 8. 6. So the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of Neceſſity a change of the Law, *Heb.* 7. 12. and Chriſt did not onely change that part of the Law which appertained to ſwearing, but divers other clauſes and ſayings thereof. As firſt, that of Circumciſion, which the Law ſtrictly commanded, *Gal.* 5. 2. Secondly, Love to Enemies, which the Law commanded to hate, *Matth.* 5. 53. Thirdly, Overcoming evil with good, &c whereas the Law commanded to take Eye for Eye, and Tooth for Tooth, &c. and many other inſtances which I might produce; yet he came not to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil it, *Matth.* 5. 17. as the Jews who upheld ſwearing, and hating of Enemies after Chriſt came, charged him withal, even as the Apoſtate Chriſtians now charges his Followers (who abide in his Doctrine, and dare not ſwear at all) to be Deſtroyers of the Law, and Contemners of Magiſtracy, and bringers in of new Doctrine, *Acts* 17. 19. which the ſame ſpirit in the *Jews* of old charged upon him and them whom God raiſed up in his dayes to preach Repentance and Remiſſion of ſins by Jeſus Chriſt; who ſaid, *Marvel not, my Brethren, if the World hate you*, 1 Joh. 3. 13. *For it hated me before it hated you; and the Servant is*

not

not greater then his Lord, &c. John 15. 18, 19.

Object. *Again, its ſaid* Paul *ſwore from that Scripture,* I proteſt before God, &c. *and in ſaying,* I call God to witneſs, *which is ſaid to be an Oath.*

Anſw. As to the firſt, it is an intruſion of the Tranſlation, It being neither in the *Greek* Copies, nor in the *Latine,* nor ſome *Engliſh* Copies.

To the ſecond, that he calls God to witneſs, is no Oath, but an earneſt atteſtation; for an Oath is that whereby ſomething is ſworn by; as *Iſrael* was to ſwear by the Lord in *Truth, Judgement* and *Righteouſneſs*; and calling God to witneſs is no more, then to ſay, I ſpeak in the preſence of God, who knows the hearts and thoughts of all men, and is no formal Oath, neither under the Law nor Goſpel.

Neither is there any command more full in either Law or Goſpel, then Chriſt's Command to his Diſciples, not to ſwear at all by any Oath, without any exception, being ſeconded by the Apoſtles command to his Brethren, as I ſaid before, enjoyning them earneſtly, above all things, not to ſwear by any thing either in Heaven or Earth, leſt they fell into condemnation, which Commands were binding to all both then preſent, and the ſucceeding Saints and Chriſtians ſeveral hundred years after Chriſt aſcended to the Father, and the Apoſtles Teſtimony was finiſhed in the World: yea, the ancient Chriſtians many years after their dayes, kept the Doctrine of Chriſt and the Apoſtle *James,* teſtifying to their death againſt the Heathen Emperors, who would have compelled them to Swear, affirming it a ſpecial mark and character of a Chriſtian, from Chriſt's words, not to ſwear at all, as ſhall be made evident anon.

By all which it will manifeſtly appear, that the *Quakers* denial of all Swearing is no New Doctrine, but the renewing of that which was commanded and practiſed by the beſt of Chriſtians above ſixteen hundred years ago, and continued in force and practice many hundred years, even till the *Beaſt* that *John* ſpoke of in the *Revelation* got up and made war with the Witneſſes, and with the Saints, and overcame them that kept the Teſtimony of Jeſus and Word of God, *Rev.* 13. 7. and then the power of Darkneſs came over the Earth, which ſet up Swearing, contrary to Chriſt's Commands,

under

under which many of the ancient Christians suffered cruel Martyrdom, for standing faithfull Witnesses for the Name of the Lord in the Earth, and for denying to swear at all to those under whom they were; as a cloud of Witnesses might be brought out of the Ecclesiastical Histories of them that denied all Swearing in divers Ages; onely for brevity I shall instance a few.

First, *Polycarpus*, who was, as its said, *John's* Disciple, and had been a Christian Eighty six years, when he came to suffer Martyrdom, the Proconsul requiring him to swear By the Emperors good Fortune, and By *Cæsars* Prosperity, (*Irenius lib. 3. cap. 1.*) which was the Custom of the *Romans* at that time, and divers Heathen Emperors to set up their Images to be worshipped, and their Persons to be Sworn by; but *Polycarpus* denied, and said, he was a Christian, and would shew forth the Doctrine of Christianity, if he desired the same, if the Proconsul would appoint a day to hear it; so *Polycarpus* refused to Swear, and kept Christ's Doctrine, for which he was led away to be burned, being an old man, and full of dayes, *Acts* and *Monuments vol. 1. fol. 55, 56, 57.*

Secondly, *Basilides*, an Officer, and afterwards a Martyr, being required to Swear, affirmed plainly, that it was not lawfull for him to Swear, for that he was a Christian: hence it appears that it was the proper mark of a Christian, not to Swear. *Acts* and *Mon. vol. 1. fol. 71. Euseb. cap. 6. pag. 98.*

Thirdly, In the dayes of *Domitius Nero*, who began to reign about sixty seven years after Christ, under whom was the First of the Ten cruel Persecutions of the Christians, he caused the Christians of all sorts to suffer; he commanded *Rome* to be set on fire in twelve places, and to avoid the infamy thereof, he accused the Christians with it, and caused them to be put to death. After him began *Domitian* the Emperor to reign, who began the second Persecution of the Christians, who was a Blasphemer of God, and an Idolater, in his dayes was *John* the Evangelist banished into the Isle of *Patmos*.

This *Domitian* the Emperor, fearing the coming of Christ again, commanded, that all that could be found of the Stock of *David* in *Jury* should be put to death: The inquisition was this, they commanded those they suspected to be Christians, to swear whether they were indeed Christians or not; but the Christians refused to Swear,

Swear, confeſſing that they were Chriſtians, and could not deny Chriſt nor his Doctrine; for which they were commanded to be put to death.

Fourthly, The *Waldenſes* or *Lioniſts*, whoſe names are ſo famous among the reformed Churches, and who are ſaid immediately to ſucceed the Apoſtles, and were the moſt ancient and true Proteſtants, profeſſed it no way lawfull for a Chriſtian man to Swear: In defence of whom, in the very matter, Biſhop *Uſher*, (*De Succeſſ. cap* 6.) late Biſhop of *Armath*, Primate of *Ireland*, pleaded their cauſe againſt the Papiſts and Jeſuits, who are Swearers, and Breakers of Oathes.

Fifthly, The *Plowman* in his Complaint, which is ſo much eſteemed of, and commended in the Book of Martyrs, ſaith, 'Lord thou 'giveth us a Commandment of Truth, in bidding us ſay yea, yea, 'and nay, nay, and ſwear for nothing: thou giveſt us alſo a Com-'mandment of meekneſs, another of poorneſs; but, Lord, he 'that calls himſelf thy Vicar on Earth hath broken both theſe 'Commandments, for he maketh a Law to compel men to Swear, 'and by his Law he teacheth, that for a man to ſave his life may for-'ſwear and Lye; and ſo, Lord, through comfort of him and his 'Laws, the people ne dreadeth to Swear or Lye; nay, oft-times to 'forſwear themſelves; Lord, here is little truth, &c. *Acts and Mon. vol.* 1. *fol.* 527.

Sixthly, It is one of *John Wickliffs* Articles, whoſe Works were as much eſteemed by the Proteſtants in *England* and *Bohemia*, as diſpiſed by the Papiſts and their Clergy, having his bones taken up and burnt forty one years after his deceaſe; and his Books were alſo burned by the Papiſts; and this Article was condemned, with many other, by the Counſel of *Conſtance*: That all Oaths which be made for any Contract or civil Bargain between man and man be unlawfull: *John Hus*, and *Jerome* of *Prague* were condemned for holding of *John Wickliff's* opinions, *Ex Actis Conſilij Con. Conſt. vol.* 1. *fol.* 606.

Seventhly, *Walter Brute*, a Teacher among the People of God, in the Age of Scorners called, *The Devil's Servant*, or *Lollard*, againſt whom the Pope and King *Richard* the ſecond, and the then ungodly Biſhops, made ſo much ado to have the Name of Truth extinguiſhed, and the Profeſſors thereof cut off. This is *Walter's* Te-

mony

mony concerning Oathes; 'I believe and obey the Doctrine of Almighty God, and my Master Jesus Christ, which teacheth that 'Christian men, in the affirmation of Truth, should pass the righteousnes of the Scribes and Pharisees of the old Testament, or 'else he excludeth them from the Kingdom of Heaven; for he 'saith, Except your righteousnes exceed the righteousnes of 'the Scribes and Pharisees ye cannot enter into the Kingdom 'of Heaven: And as concerning Oathes, he saith, It hath 'been said of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self, but 'shalt perform those things unto the Lord thou knowest; But 'I say unto you, thou shalt not Swear at all, neither by Heaven, 'nor by the Earth; but let your communication be yea, yea, and 'nay, nay, for whatsoever is more then these cometh of evil: 'Therefore as the Perfection of the ancient men of the old Testament was not to forswear themselves; so the Perfection of a 'Christian man is not to Swear at all; because he is so commanded 'of Christ, whose Commands in no wise must be broken; although 'the City of *Rome* is contrary to the Doctrine of Christ. *Acts* and *Mon. vol.* 1. *fol.* 653. *Rich.* 2d's days.

Eightly, *Chrysostom*, who was a Bishop of *Constantinople*, in commendation of whom much is said in the Ecclesiastical History, he blameth them greatly that brought forth a Book to swear upon; charging his Clerks, that in no wise, they constrained any body to Swear, whether they think a man sweareth true or false, saying, *It is a sin to Swear well, &c.* Acts and Mon. vol. 1. *fol.* 701, 702.

Ninethly, *Jerome*, who was an ancient Father and Teacher in the Church, whom all the Protestants owned, upon that place, *Matth.* 5. 37. and *James* 5. 12. these were his words, *It was permitted under the Law to the Jews, as being tender, and as it were Infants, that they might offer Sacrifices to God, lest they should sacrifice to Idols; so they might swear by God, not that it was rightfull so to do, but because it was better to swear by God, then by false gods and Devils; but the great Evangelist admits not of an Oath, since every true saying is equal therewnto, &c.*

Tenthly, In like manner doth *Theophilist*, an ancient Father of the Church, whom the Protestants own, and have often cited his Doctrine, for proof upon the place in controversie, saith, *Learn hence that under the Law it was not evil for one to Swear;*

but

but since the coming of Christ it is evil, as is Circumcision, and in sum, what ever is judicial; for it may become a child to suck, but not a man.

Eleventh, And *Ambrose* saith upon *Psalm* 110. *Let him then Swear that cannot repent of his Oath*; and a little after the said *Ambrose* saith, *Do not immitate him in swearing, whom you cannot immitate in following*; and indeed the principle solution given by him is, *Swear not at all.*

Twelfth, Many other Saints and Martyrs I might instance at large, both in *Henry* the fourth, and *Henry* the sixth's days, whereof some were burned, some cruelly handled, who said, *It was not lawfull to Swear in private Cases. Vol.* 1. *pag.* 896. *Hen.* 6. days.

Thirteenth, In *Henry* the fourth dayes it is said, That neither the Pope nor Prelates, neither any Ordinary can compel any man to swear by the Bible-book, or any Creature of God; for saith a Master of Divinity, *It is not lawfull either to give or to take any Oath upon a Book*; *for every Book*, saith he, *is nothing else but divers Creatures of which it is made*: *Therefore to swear upon a Book, is to swear by Creatures, and this swearing is ever unlawfull.* Acts and Mon. vol. 1. fol. 701.

It would melt any tender heart to hear of the Cruelties and Tortures which that Blood-thirsty spirit invented to destroy the Bodies of those who kept the Commands of Christ, and could not be forced to swear by all the Cruelties that the power of darkness, either in *Henry* the fourth's dayes, *Henry* the sixth's dayes, *Richard* the seconds, or Queen *Maries* dayes could invent to torment their Bodies withal, which was not a few, as may be seen upon record at this day in the first, second and third Volums of the Books of Martyrs.

But they who loved Christ, and kept his Commands, in those dayes had power and strength given them to endure what ever the Lord suffered wicked hands to inflict upon them, by which their Faith and Patience was fully tried and manifested; but after the Iniquities of their Adversaries were full, the Lord brought swift and sore destruction upon them, divers manner of wayes, as a just reward of their Blood and Cruelty, as may be read at large in the latter end of the said Books: For God in every Age shewed his severe wrath against the Spirit of Perfection about Worship and Service

crifice unto him, (*Gen.* 3.) even from the dayes of wicked *Cain* unto this hour, that ſpirit is accurſed, and drove out from the preſence of the God of *Iſrael* where ever it appeareth at this day, even as it was in the dayes of *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Herod*, *Pilate*, and all the *Chief Prieſts*; and after them the wicked Emperors and Kings; and after them the divers Popes and their Blood-thirſty Rabble of Clergy, and all other, under what Name or Form ſoever at this day, where that ſpirit of Perſecution yet remains, the Curſe and Vengeance of the Almighty doth purſue it, where ever it goes; though God ſuffers long, as he did *Pharaoh* and the reſt, to vex *Iſrael*, till their iniquities was full: even ſo the Lord in theſe latter Ages hath ſuffered many to act much violence and wickedneſs againſt his Heritage, for their obedience to the Commands of his Son, and they who love him now keeps his Commands, as they did in the dayes of old; for he ſaith unto his, *If ye love me keep my Commandments*, and his Commandments is not grievous but joyous, 1 *John* 5. 2, 3, 4. and *John* ſaid, *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments; for he that ſaith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him*, 1 John 2. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

By all which it is more then manifeſt that the moſt ancient true and faithfull Chriſtians in their day and time gave a teſtimony againſt *Swearing at all*, and ſuffered for it, both under the Pope, and many Heathen Emperors; but they who would be accounted Chriſtians now, having got the power into their hands, are found in the ſame ſpirit of Perſecution, as they were in, under which the true Chriſtians alwayes ſuffered, and do act as furiouſly, according to the power given them from above, as they did in dayes paſt, and no doubt would run as high as they did, in Burning, Hanging Gibbitting and Strangling, if they had the leaſt colour of Law to countenance them therein.

By all which, let the ſober and honeſt hearted judge, whether the *Quakers* Doctrine of not Swearing be any new Doctrine or not? and whether our Sufferings this many years for our obedience to the Commands of Chriſt be not vindicated both by Chriſt, and all his Diſciples in their dayes, and by all the ancient Chriſtians before cited? and whether they, who now calls themſelves Chriſtians, are not far degenerated from the Life and Doctrine of Chriſtianity, though

though they retain the name, and from the practice of the ancient Christians, breaking Christ's Commands, and forcing others so to do, which in time will pull down the wrath of God upon their heads, if they repent not; *For is is not every one that saith Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 7. 21. It is not the name of Christianity, nor a Profession of Christ's words recorded in the Scripture, that will hide you *in the day of the Lord that burneth, which shall burn as an Oven, wherein all the Proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall leave them neither Root nor Branch*, Mal. 4. 1. *the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it: For the Earth is filled with violence, and the Land mourns because of Oathes*; (Jer. 5.) *and the Proud are counted happy, and they that work wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are even delivered*, Mal. 3. 15. *and they that reprove Iniquity in the Gate are made a prey upon*; for which God hath begun to visit this Nation with his sore Judgments, which will bring desolation in the end to them who continue in the aforesaid Abominations.

Object. *And furthermore, some wicked and malicious spirits have said, we who are called Quakers will not swear, because we desire to plot and contrive mischief against the King and Government, &c.*

This is altogether false and groundless, as many years experience will witness for us, who were never found plotting against any Government under which we have been, but have from time to time patiently born the rod of the wicked since we were a people; and if we durst break the Command of Christ to Swear any Oath, we should as willingly swear obedience to the Power and Government under which we are, as any Oath that could be tendred us; this, for my own part I speak heartily, willingly, and freely, without any reserve of mind whatever; and if any should have power given them to imprison my body so long more as I have suffered here, if I would not consent to hurt the Kings Person, or the person of any, I could as willingly suffer for the denial of that, as I have for my constant obedience and adhering to the Command of Christ, who, saith, *Swear not at all*; for the same Jesus commands me not to war with flesh and blood, but to love my Enemies; and though I should suffer five times more then I have done, I could never be brought to redeem my self through the destruc-

on of the person of another, though never so wicked and ungodly; for I know Vengeance is the Lords, and he will repay it, *Rom.* 12.19. and therefore have I committed my just and innocent cause unto him, who in every Age and Generation of the World recompenced *Tribulation upon them that troubled his people*, 2 *Thess.* 1.6. though he spared some of them long, to see if his long suffering would lead them to repentance; but as they heardned their hearts against him, and his people, he manifestly appeared in many Judgments against them, to awaken them, as he hath done of late years against those who have oppressed his Royal Seed in this Age, which he hath caused to spring up in his people, scornfully called *Quakers*, which shall spread over the face of the Earth; yea, it is as easie to stop the course of the Sun from running his course, as a Giant, as to hinder the growth of the Seed of God; for he hath blessed it, and no inchantment shall prevail against it; yea, if all our bodies should be destroyed in whom it is risen, yet after us shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed in it; for the more it is persecuted, the more it grows; as when a Vine-tree is cut, the more it is cut, the thicker it spreads; so doth the Truth at this day, as in Ages past, He was made perfect through Sufferings, *Hebr.* 2.10. and he is the same still, and will remain when all the wrath of man which works not the righteousness of God shall have an end, and be no more; and therefore we cannot fear him that kills the body, and hath no more that he can do; but are taught both to love and fear him, who after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast both into Hell, *Matth.* 10.28, 29. and therefore are we made a gazing stock to the World now, and have as little love from the world, as our fore-fathers had in dayes past, marvelling not why the world hateth us, seeing it hated him who is the Prince of Life, and condemned him to death as a Blasphemer and a Deceiver, before it hated us, *Luke* 5.21. *Matth.* 27.63. for the Servant is not greater then his Lord; and it was the chief Priests that was the chief Murtherers of him, for they stirred up the Rulers to do it, *Luke* 23.13. which happily otherwise they would have dreaded; and so brought Innocent Blood upon their heads, and upon their Posterity for ever.

And who is it now that stirrs up the Rulers against his Appearance? Is it not the chief Priests, who both are, and ever were the greatest

greateſt Enemies that he and his people had upon the Earth? who knows, that if people ſhould ceaſe from man, and follow Chriſt, and learn of him, down goes their Merchandize by which they maintain their Pride and Pomp, for the preſerving of which they will cry up any thing that will promote their trade, as hath been manifeſt in *England* within theſe late years; but God hath ſhaken his hand at their diſhoneſt gain, and is bringing contempt and miſery upon them, *Ezek.* 22. 12, 13. and they will become a by-word to many in Ages to come; and the Arm of Fleſh which they have ſo long truſted in ſhall wither before them; and the Lord will more and more gather his Sheep from their mouthes, that they ſhall not alwayes prey upon them, *Ezek.* 34. 10. the Mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it; and all their rage and madneſs ſhall but heap Coals of fire upon their own heads, for they have over-paſſed the deeds of the wicked in Drunkenneſs, Swearing, Whoring, Lying Couzening, Cheating, Pride, Luxury, Wantonneſs, Covetouſneſs which is Idolatry, a Generation of Vipers, ſtinging, and moſt grievouſly perſecuting all who will not put into their mouthes; I might fill a Volumn of their multiplied iniquities, which ever were the certain tokens, and fore-runners of deſolation and deſtruction, and the people thorow their evil example are overwhelmed in all manner of debauchery and uncleanneſs, even drinking in iniquity as the Ox doth water: Oh, was ever *Sodom* or *Nineveh* ſo over-grown with iniquity, as *England* now is? what will be the end of all theſe Abominations under which this Land mourns? Oh, that my head were as water, and mine eyes a Fountain to tears, that I might thorowly bemoan the Calamity of this people; for all fleſh hath corrupted his way before the Lord, their thoughts are the thoughts of vanity, and their works the works of iniquity, deſtruction and miſery is in their wayes, and the way of peace they know not, *Rom.* 3. 16, 17. Oh, repent, repent, and amend your wayes, for the Kingdom of God is at hand, *Matth.* 4. 17. the Sword of the Almighty is drawn, it is fitted and furbiſhed for a mighty ſlaughter, and it ſhall wound the hairy ſcalp of every one that goeth in iniquity, *Pſalm* 68. 21. Oh, therefore, return, return unto the Lord while he is near, and ſeek his face while he may be found; for he willeth not the death of a Sinner; therefore, if you periſh, your deſtruction is of your ſelves.

A Brief Discovery of the entering in of Antichrists and false Prophets, with their Marks and Fruits who instituted Swearing, contrary to Christ's Command, and many other things which now are, and for a long time have been upheld contrary to the Scripture, and practice of the Saints of old.

NOw you who call your selves Christians, open your eyes, and see from whom you have derived Swearing upon a Book, which now you are so zealous for, that most of you calls it an Ordinance of God, let both Christ and the Apostles Testimonies be Witnesses against you herein; and not onely them, but the Testimony of the best and most ancient Christians, since their dayes, who under-went most grievous Sufferings, both from the hands of many Heathen Emperors several hundred years before there was a Pope; and after that *Beast* arose out of the Sea, (which then had flowed over the Earth) under whom many faithfull Martyrs suffered for their obedience to the Faith and Doctrine of Christ, who testified against Swearing, and many other abominable Idols, which that Beast had derived from the Heathens, against Christ's Command, all whose Testimonies stands as a Cloud of Witnesses against you at this day, who are swearing upon Books, and laying your hands upon them, saying, So help me God; which, at the best was but invented by *Justinian* the Heathen Emperor, and after him by the Pope, from whom it is derived at furthest; and so condemns the *Quakers* to lose all their Goods and Lands, and to lie in Prison during the Kings pleasure, onely because they cannot deny Christ, nor his Commands, nor the practice of the Ancient Christians many hundred years ago; though there is a witness in many of you that the people of God, whom you thus cruelly persecute, never plotted any mischief against the King, or any man, nor ever countenanced any who would; so that there is not any people in *England*, *Scotland* or *Ireland* that the King may more confide in, then in the true born *Quakers*, who cannot betray the Lord,

Lord, nor the King; but they who are not faithfull to God and his Truth, can never be faithfull to the King.

Here follows several instances of the Priests practices, for which they have no Scripture, but were instituted by the Papists and Bishops of Rome.

1. *Laudius Espontius* a Popish Bishop, at a Council held at *Pysoy* in *France*, in the year One thousand five hundred, ordained, that Infant Baptism should be received by tradition, because it could not be proved by Scripture.

2. *Ignatius*, Bishop of *Rome*, was the first that ordained that Infants should be Baptised, and have Godfathers and Godmothers; oh, what blaspemous words hath Antichrist brought in against God? how can these be God and Father, or God and Mother to the Child? and how can they promise and vow that the Child shall forsake the Devil and all his Works, and keep Gods holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all his dayes, when as the same men and women do believe before-hand, that neither they themselves, nor the child can ever perform these things? Is this Scriptural, or Papistical, answer Priests?

3. *Boni*, Bishop of *Rome*, built the first Temple after the Apostacy, in honour to the Virgin *Prudentia*, and since the Papists have built thousands and consecrated them, for which they have no Scripture, or example from Christ or any of the ancient Christians.

4. *Dionysius*, in the year Two hundred sixty seven, divided both *Rome*, and all their Places into Parishes and Dioceses for Bishops.

5. *Silvester*, Bishop of *Rome*, ordained, that all Churches should be Christened and anointed with Oyl; and called them St *Peter*, St *Paul*, St *Katherine*, St *Maudlen*, St *Helen*, St *Dunston*, St *Ambrose*, St *Gregory*, St *Clement*, St *Giles*, &c. which superstitious names are upheld to this day, by those who say they obey the Pope.

6. *Clement*, Bishop, ordained Confirmation of Children, and said none was perfect that wanted that; he also ordained, that Children should be smote on the cheek, and signed with the sign the Cross.

7. At

7. At *Lyons* in *France* they appointed holy dayes to encrease their Religion; (viz.) *Christmas*, *Candlemas*, *Lammas*, which was never ordained nor consecrated of Christ nor any of his Servants, who neither went to Mass, nor observed any Mass-Dayes, but kept Gods Command, who said, *Six dayes shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do, &c.* Exod. 20.

8. *Boniface* the fourth ordained *Stephen*, *Innocent*, *Lawrence*, *Michael*, *Martin*, *John Baptist*, and all the Saints dayes to be kept holy, against Gods command before cited; and the Apostle testified against such Observations, *Gal.* 4. 10.

9. *Gregory* ordained, that Mass, or short prayer should be said over the Tombs of the Dead: Now Priests, see the original of your Prayers over the dead, and see if it be Apostolical, yea or nay?

10. *Gregory* also ordained, that neither Flesh, nor any thing that had affinity in it, as Cheese, Milk, Butter, Eggs should be eaten on such dayes as were Fasts; here came in that Doctrine of Devils, commanding to abstain from Meats, which God hath commanded to be received with thanksgiving, of them that believe and obey the Truth.

11. *Sabinianus* ordained, that People should come together to hear Service, by ringing of Bells at certain hours.

12. *John* the twenty second, Bishop of *Rome*, ordained Bells to be tol'd three times a day; here was the original of your Bells and tolings, from the Popes Decrees.

13. Singing of Mattens at set times *Hierom* appointed, as *Polydore* and others say.

14. *Pelagius* the second commanded Priests to say them daily; and *Vitilianus* invented the decent tunes wherewith the Hyms be sung, and joyned thereto the Organs, &c.

15. *Telesphorus* appointed that Lent should be kept before *Easter*, and added another week to it, which is called *Quinquagessima*; and also ordained Epistles and Gospels; and *Damasus* divided them as they are read at this day in the Reformed Churches so called.

16. *Anastasius* commanded that People should stand at the reading of the Gospel.

17. *Higinus*

17. *Higinus* the nineth Bishop of *Rome*, ordained the Communion to be celebrated three times a year.

18. *Pius*, about the year Four hundred and seven, after Christ, the tenth Bishop, ordained, that *Easter*-day should be kept on the Sunday.

19. *Urbanus* the seventeenth Bishop of *Rome*, ordained Churchyards to be hallowed, and forbad marriage of Priests.

20. *Sextus* the twenty fourth Bishop of *Rome*, in the year Two hundred and twenty after Christ, ordained the Priests to wear holy Garments, as Copes, and divers other things, in imitation of *Aaron*; and then came in Surplices; he commanded Images to be set up in Churches.

Much more such Trumpery might be instances too tedious to rehearse, which is now upheld among the Protestants, so called, as great Ordinances of God, though such things were never ordained by him in any Age of the World, but invented by the several Antichrists which *John* saw entring into the World in his day, which are upheld by the false Prophets of our Age, without any ground or colour from that which they pretend to be their Rule (*viz.*) the Scriptures, who have either in matter or form erred from the Spirit of Truth and the Scriptures in every thing relating to their Worship, professing in words to know God, but in works denying him, being abominable and unclean, and to every good work a Reprobate.

A few words followeth concerning Tythes, manifesting them no Gospel-maintenance, but since Christ and the Apostle dayes invented by the Papists.

TYthes were never commanded to be paid by the Lord to any but *Israel* under the *Law*; neither was it ever payable, but by the Jews in the first Covenant, under the Levitical Priesthood, out of the Land of *Canaan*, to such Levites as had no part nor portion allotted them in the promised Land, the Tythe or Tenth part of the increase thereof was commanded to be given unto them by the Lord, for the Office of the Priesthood, and for the service of the

Tabernacle, *Deut.* 18. 4. and the Levites out of the Tythes were to offer up to the Lord a Tenth part of the Tythes, and give it unto *Aaron* the Prieſt, for himſelf and his Sons, *Ezek.* 45. 13. and no other portion had the Levitical Prieſts out of the Tythes, but the tenth of the tenths, for the reſt had the Levites that did ſerve at the Tabernacle, and it was alſo to relieve Strangers, Fatherleſs and Widows, *Deut.* 14. 29. So *Iſrael's* Tythes were not all given to the Prieſts, but the Poor was maintained out of it beſide, for there was not to be a Begger in *Iſrael*; here was the end for which it was at firſt inſtituted.

But Chriſt the Everlaſting High-Prieſt being come, he changed that Prieſthood, which was but to continue until the time of Reformation, *Hebr.* 9. 10. and the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change of the Law, that took Tythes, *Heb.* 7. 12. after which there was never any Command given by Chriſt to any of his Miniſters or Servants under the Second Covenant, either to take or receive Tythes of any people; and for Eight hundred years after Chriſt it was never impoſed upon the People, but they might give it to whom they would, at their own pleaſure.

And the Maintenance which Chriſt allotted his Miniſters under the Goſpel is expreſſed in *Luke*, into whatſoever houſe they entred, to eat and drink ſuch things as were ſet before them, for the Labourer was worthy of his hire, *Luke* 10. 7, 8. This is the hire the Miniſters of Chriſt are contented withal at this day; but the Miniſters of Antichriſt are not contented with their Allowance, nor the allowance of the Firſt Covenant, which ſhews that they are Miniſters of neither, for if they were, they would act according to one; but their Fruits plainly teſtifies to their faces, that they are Miniſters of Antichriſt, who have run when the Lord never ſent them, *Matthew* 7. 16, 17, 18.

Object. *Now ſome have pleaded for Tythes from* Abraham's *giving the Tenth of the Spoils of the Kings, &c. to* Melchiſedeck, *&c.* Heb. 7. 2.

Anſw. This was not Tythe of Lands increaſe, neither was it any Command of God to *Abraham*, but a free voluntary gift out of the Spoils he had taken in war; (but Mark) *He was yet in the loyns of his Father when* Melchiſedeck *met him*, Hebr. 7. 10. and therefore no Goſpel Plea: So who would have Tythes from the Scripture,

ture, must go and meet the Souldiers as they return from the Spoils of their Enemies, and receive the Tenth thereof at their hands, if they will give it them freely; for it is evident, that he who changed the Priesthood, and fulfilled the Law which commanded Tythes of Lands, sprang out of *Judah*, of which Tribe *Moses* spake nothing concerning Priesthood, *Hebr.* 7. 13, 14.

And it is yet far more evident, for that after the similitude of Melchisedeck *their ariseth another Priest*, verse 15.

Who is not made after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the Power of an endless Life, verse 16.

For there is verily a disannulling of the Commandment going before, [mark] a disannulling of the Commandment, that was carnal, where Tythes were included, *for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof*, verse 17, 18.

Because *it made nothing perfect, but the bringing of a better hope did, by which they drew nigh to God*, verse 19. which better hope was, *Christ in them the hope of glory*.

By all which it is evident, that whoever receives or payes Tythes as any Legal right, denies Christ come in the Flesh, and such are the Antichrists which the Scripture speaks of, 2 *Joh.* 7. and this is the reason why they who now witness him come in their Flesh cannot uphold that Priesthood which takes Tythes, knowing that he hath changed the Priesthood, and the Law also, and not thorow covetousness to save so much of our Estates, as some have falsely judged; for if we had no reason for the denial of Tythes, but to save our goods, we would assuredly pay them, knowing aforehand, if we do not pay them, we shall certainly lose three times so much, at the best; therefore humane reason would not lead us to deny them upon that score; but it is only in Conscience towards God that we cannot pay them, knowing the Priesthood changed, and the Law also that commanded them disannull'd, as is said above; and therefore, if we should uphold that which Christ have disannul'd, we should be Antichrists, like them, and wo would be our portion; And therefore we joyfully suffer the spoiling of our goods for the Name of Christ, and the hope that is set before us, *Hebr.* 10. 34. knowing that the Captain of our Salvation was made perfect thorow Sufferings, *Hebr.* 2. 10.

And because we could not deny him come in our Flesh, have the

Chief Priest of our Age devoured much of our Substance, even beyond the bounds of humanity, and the Law by which they pretend to claim it, which, at most, allows them but treble damages against them that refuse to pay them, yet they have not been contented with five times the value; nay, it would pierce any tender heart to hear of the havock and spoil they have made of our Bodies and Goods throughout this Nation, for our witnessing Christ come in the Flesh; appearing manifestly worse then the *Jews* that scourged the Apostles of Christ, for they abated *Paul* one stripe of forty every time they whipped him, 2 *Cor.* 11. 24. though their Law allotted forty stripes, yet they would not go to the rigour thereof: But these merciless Wolves have exceeded in cruelty, to the power they have had given them, all that ever I read of in any Age; for proof hereof I refer the Reader to a Book called, *A Record of Sufferings for Tythes*, wherein they are thorowly proved grievous Wolves indeed, *Acts* 20. 29. who have exceeded the rigour of their own Laws many degrees, even to the utter undoing, as far as in them lies, of whole Families.

Object. *Some have pleaded the right of Tythes under the Gospel, from these words, Ye pay Tythe of Mint, and Anise, and Cummin, &c. these things ought ye to have done, &c.* Matth. 23. 23.

Answ. This was spoken by Christ to the Scribes and Pharisees, who denied him, and upheld the first Priesthood, and therefore he called them Blind-Guides, and cried many woes against them, for their Hypocrisie, *Matth.* 23. 16, 17. and seeing they did not own own him who fulfill'd the Law, they ought tythe their Mint and Annis, &c. and so all those who know not Christ the better hope brought into them to tythe their increase; but who so doth, must not assume the title of Christians, for they can never be received *Jure Divino* by any under the Second Covenant; I suppose the Tythe-mongers have been ashamed of that plea several years.

Therefore let us come to their plea *Jure Humano*, which is their main Prop or Pillar; they say, by the Law of man, *They have as good right to the Tenth part, as the Owner hath to the Nine parts, &c.*

This is much like the *Jews* plea against Christ, to take away his life, *John* 19. 7. because they had a Law so to do, which made them bold and impudent, not regarding the evil they did in executing their

their Law, when it turned against Christ and his followers, neither would their Law they were so zealous for, defend them from the stroke of Gods terrible vengeance, which after they had filled up the measure of their Iniquity, came upon them and their Posterity, though they were suffered to reign long over the Heritage of God.

But let these Tythe-mongers tell us, who first invented this Tythe to Priests since Christ? and if they can clear the Pope of it, and deduct it from the Scriptures, or the ancient Christians, let them; and then they will have some colour of Christianity to demand them.

But this *Jure humano* was the main plea in *Oliver Cromwels* time, by these tything temporising Priests, to uphold their pluralities and Tythes, though they could throw away the Common-prayer-Book at his Command, and silently suffer the people to want that which the same Priests now cries up as an Oracle and Ordinance of God, and Divine Service; for the reading of which they now wholly plead Tythe their due *Jure humano*, yet in those dayes, when that which they now call Divine Service was rejected by them, they pleaded and ravened as much for the Fleece as they do now, though they suffered thousands to perish without that which they now threaten damnation to all who will not hear and receive; which if they had been true Shepherds, they would have laid down, not only their liberty and their Tythes, but their lives for their Flocks in those dayes, rather then they should have been led away by those they now count Wolves, *John* 10. 11, 12, 13. but the Love of their Tythes and Pluralities which *Oliver* suffered them to enjoy, over-ballanced their love to their Flocks: and no question, if the Pope come and hold out the Mass Book to them in one hand, with Tythes and large Revenues in the other, and promise, in accepting of the one, they shall enjoy the other, and for refusal shall lose both, these cunning Steers-men, that can alwayes sail in the eye of the wind, will no doubt swallow this Pill with little or no difficulty also, and cry up the Mass-Book for as Divine an Oracle, and Ordinance of God, as the Directory was with them in its day, or as the Common-Prayer now is with all its Rites and Ceremonies now in their esteem; for then also they may plead for their Tythes *Jure humano*.

And

And they who formerly endured turning out, could silently suffer their Flocks to be devoured by them whom they counted Wolves, and durst not openly declare against them, nor enter into their Synagogues and dispute with them, as the manner of *Paul*, and the true Ministers of Christ was, *Acts* 17. 16, 17, 18. for fear of loss of liberty, or some other profit; if such be not the Hirelings that Christ spoke of, that flees before the Wolf, and leaves their sheep, I know not any Hirelings at all; for was the Common-Prayer Idolatry in *Oliver's* dayes, and Divine-Service now? how was the nature and property of it altered?

The main and principal Foundation of the Law of England *is the Law of God*, so says the Law-Book, *Doctor and Student*. cap. 2. pag. 4. in these words,

'There is a Law written in the heart of man, which is man cre-'ated in the Image of God, and this Law is alwayes good and righ-'teous, stirring up the man to do that which is good, and abhor 'the evil; and therefore against this Law, (saith the Book) Pre-'scription, Statute, Custom may not prevail; and if any be brought 'against it, they are void, and against Justice, &c.

If so, then let all who hath the least spark of reason left in them judge, whether it is not high presumption against God, and his unlimitted Prerogative and Royal-Law written in the hearts of his people, according to his Promise by the mouth of his holy Prophet *Jeremiah* & *Jer*, 31. 33. to set up mans Law above it, and force the execution thereof against it; for in the Second Covenant, wherein God promised to write his Law in his peoples hearts, Tythes and their Law were abolished, as is said before; therefore Prescription, Statute, and Custom that is brought against the aforesaid Royal-Law of God written in the heart, is void and against Justice by the aforesaid Law-Book of *England*, which will not admit of *Jure Humano* to prevail against *Jure Divino*.

Here

Here followeth several Presidents of the Ancient Christians, some in the Apostles dayes, and some since, who had no Tythes from the People, who gave Testimony against them that did require them.

IN the Churches of *Antioch*, *Galatia* and *Corinth* the Saints possessed every man his own estate, where the Apostle ordained a weekly offering of the Saints, that every man might offer freely of what God had blessed him withal, which was put in the hands of Deacons for the maintenance of the poor, and other necessary uses, *Acts* 11. 29. for Christ having in *Luke* 10. allotted their Ministers their Maintenance, they were contented with it; and when they returned to him again, they could say they had no want; but then they lived not in pride, nor fulness of bread, nor went in long Robes, nor maintained their Wives in pride and excess, as the men of our Age do; for such Christ never sent in any Age; for they were not Lord Bishops, nor call'd of men Masters, but were Patterns and Examples to the Flock, and and said to the Disciples and Brethren, *Be ye Followers of us, even as we are of Christ*; but now if people should follow none, but they that are Followers of Christ, the Tythe-mongers would have none at all.

But the aforesaid contribution continned amongst the Ancient Christians about Three hundred years till the great Persecution under *Maximinian* and *Diocletian*, as *Eusebius* witnesseth, and so doth *Tertulian*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, and others, here was not Tythes so much as spoken to of the Christian Ministers, but they did abide in the Doctrine of Christ, and having food and rayment they were therewith content.

After which time some Lands were given to the Church, but *Origen* saith, 'It is not lawfull for any Minister to possess Lands, 'given to the Church, to his own use.

Cyprian, Bishop of *Carthage*, also testified the same, and sheweth how the Church maintaineth many poor, and that her own expences was full of frugality, and her diet sparing and plain, *Cyprian Epist.*

Epiſt. 27, 34, 36. *Proſper* alſo ſaith, 'That a Miniſter able to live 'of himſelf, ought not to deſire any thing of the people, and he 'that receiveth it, doth it not without great ſin. And the *Bohemians* in their fruitfull and Chriſtian Exhortation to Kings and Princes, to ſtir them up to zeal for the Goſpel, in many Articles againſt the Clergy of their Antichriſtian Practiſes: In the fifteenth Article againſt them, they ſay thus, &c.

'That they receive Tythes of men, and will of right have them, 'and preach, and ſay, that men are bound to give them Tythes, and 'therein they ſay falſly; for they cannot prove by the New-Teſta-'ment, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt commanded it, and his Diſciples 'warned no man ſo to do, neither did themſelves ſo receive them; 'but although in the Old-Teſtament it were commanded to give 'Tythes; yet it cannot thereby be proved, that Chriſtian men are 'bound thereunto; for this precept of the Old-Teſtament had an 'end in the firſt year of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, like as the precept 'of Circumciſion; wherefore, Beloved, conſider, and ſee how your 'Biſhops ſeduce you with things that have no proof; Chriſt ſaid in 'the 11th of *Luke*, *Give Alms of thoſe things that remain*, but he 'ſaid not, Give the Tenth of the Goods ye poſſeſs, &c. *Acts and Mon. vol.* 1. *fol.* 860. *Col.* 2. in *Hen.* 5. dayes.

But the firſt that reſtrained peoples freedom in this kind, was the Council under Pope *Alexander* the third, *Anno* 1180. by whoſe time much Wickedneſs and Idolatry was crept in among them, as Hiſtory relates.

But the moſt ſtricteſt decree was made at the Council of *Trent*, under Pope *Pius* the fourth, about the year 1560. they commanded Tythes to be paid under the penalties of Excommunication. About the years 800, 900, and 1000. and after, Tythes were called the Lord's Goods: So here was the riſe of Prieſts Tythes, which for many hundred years they held *Jure Divino*, as they ſaid, which ever ſince they have exacted againſt the Law of God and right reaſon, and have not only robbed God, but the poor alſo; and therefore is every Pariſh forced, to keep the poor from ſtarving, unto whom (if any) the Tythes do moſt properly belong; and yet though the Prieſts go away with the Tythes, it is very hard, in many places, to get them to contribute any thing to the Poor-Tax, manifeſting their Charity far ſhort of the Levitical Prieſts, who for-

formerly out of the Tythes maintained the Widows and Fa[illegible]
less, &c. and consequently far beneath the Ministers of the Go[illegible]
spel: And furthermore, did ever any, either of the *Levites* or Mi[illegible]
sters of the Gospel sue any people at Law, that separated from them,
for Maintenance? nay, was ever such inhumane actions known
from the worst of the Merchants of *Babylon* (let History testifie)
as to tear four or five times so much as they pretend their due,
from them who do not like their Wares, and troubles them for
nothing; nay, *Balaam*, though he loved the wages of unrighteousness,
yet he durst not take it, but these are not contented with three
times so much, which modesty would blush to appear in; if these be
not the greedy dumb Dogs which *Isaiah* spoke of, which can never
have enough, I know not where they are, *Isa.* 56. 10, 11, 12.

The with-holding of these pretended dues, at farthest, is but a
[illegible]pass against them, and it is their manner often to pray to the
[illegible], to forgive them their trespasses, as they forgive them that
[illegible] against them, &c. Now let the honest hearted judge,
[illegible] they forgive such as trespass against them, when they
[illegible] the utmost rigour of the Law against such as trespass
[illegible], yea or nay? How do these men think to be forgiven of
the Lord? *For*, saith Christ, *if ye forgive men their trespasses,
your Heavenly Father will forgive you your trespasses; but if ye
forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Fa-
ther forgive you your trespasses*, Matth. 6. 14, 15. And *Peter* said,
*Lord how often shall my Brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till
seven times?* Jesus said unto him, *I say not unto thee, until seven
times, but until seventy times seven*, Matth. 18. 21, 22. So if these
Priests could really prove that Tythe was their due, the with-hold-
ing of them is but a trespass committed against them once a year at
farthest; now if Christ would not allow of *Peter*'s forgiving his
Brother seven times, but would have him forgive him seventy
times seven, which is Four hundred and ninety times; what kind of
Christians are they who take treble revenge at least, and often many
five times for every trespass against them? this is so far from Chris-
tianity, that *Turks* and *Pagans* would blush at it. Thus far I was
laid upon me to give this short Testimony against this abominable
Oppression, under which many groans at this day, that if possi-
ble the ears of people might be opened, and that they may

how they have been blinded with things that have no Foundation, nor colour from the Scripture; and they who pretend the Scripture to be their Rule, may see that they walk beside their pretended Rule, in either paying or receiving Tythes as any Gospel-right; therefore are they justly condemned and reproved by their own Rule, which will for ever stand a witness against them, both in that, and all other ungodly practices by them upheld at this day, for which they have not the least colour of Scripture to vindicate them therein.

Ambros Rigge.

Postscript.

I Could not let this little Book pass without annexing hereunto some few of the *Bonner* like practises of *Leonard Letchford*, Priest of *Hurst-Pierpoint*, who calls himself a Gospel-Minister, which within this seven years last past he hath done against *Ambros Rigge* for his obedience unto the Commands of Christ, as before is expressed. And secondly, of the proceedings of the aforesaid *Letchford* against *Ambros*'s wife, because she could not in conscience pay him Tythe, for the causes aforesaid, as knowing it no Gospel right.

To the first, it alwayes hath been the practice of the spirit of Antichrist, the better to effect its mischievous purposes, to destroy and root out the Flock of Christ's Fold; first to clothe them with Wolves skins, and then to set the Dogs and Lions to devour and tear them to pieces.

Now in the year 1662, and since, this spirit hath manifestly appeared in the aforesaid *Letchford*; for when by the spiritual Weapon he could not at all defend himself, as a Minister of Christ ought to do, he stirred up the Rulers in *Hurst*, aforesaid, as knowing aforehand that for Conscience the said *Ambros* could not swear, to tender him the Oath of Allegiance, on purpose to insnare him, for the refusal of which he was committed to *Horsham* Goal the 28th day of the 3d Moneth aforesaid; after the said *Letchford* had effected this, he, with *George Vinter* Priest of *Cove-old*, cloathed the

said

said *Ambros* with a reproach, as though he had run away from his Wife and Children in *Lincolnshire*, and had left them to the Parish; which when this report was spread, it was asked *George Parker*, who formerly was said to be a *Lincolnshire* man, out of what Town the said *Ambros* run away, who before witness said, out of the Town of *Eagle*, which after Examination proved an abominable Lye; for the best part of twenty persons of the Town of *Eagle* in *Lincolnshire*, with several Officers both of their Church and others, who had lived in the said Town, some twenty, some forty, some fifty years, and never knew any such man as *Ambros Rigge* live there in all their time, as may appear by a Certificate given under their hands, yet to be seen; yet these two Priests by these and other abominable Lyes and aggravations, got the Judge, at the Assizes following, to condemn the said *Ambros* in a præmunire, at which Assizes *Letchford* appeared in person as one of the fiercest of *Ambros*'s Accusars, saying, he would aggravate the matter, at which words the Judge reproved him, and stopt his mouth; so after he had got what he then saw was possible against *Ambros*, he afterwards stirred up the Magistrates and the Goaler to add as much affliction to his Bonds as he could; by the which *R. Lackin*, then Goaler, to whom he wrote many threatning Letters, if he would not be severe towards *Ambros*, and keep him close; so that the said *Lackin* said, that they would hang *Ambros* if they could, and seeing it his opportunity to act his will upon him, and several others in prison with him for Conscience sake, called them into the Wards, and began, in the first place, to deny them small Beer, unless they would give six shillings a Kilderkin for that which was sometimes worse then water; and because *Ambros*, and others, could not uphold that Oppression, was forced to drink water well nigh a year and a half, & to try *Ambros* further, *Lackins* turned him into the low Goal among the Fellons, and there kept him his own pleasure; and in the Winter following, when the Frost and Snow lay thick upon the ground, the Goaler shut up *Ambros* again in the middle Ward, and took away his Bed, and forced him to lie upon the Boords for many weeks together, being close lockt up, and would hardly suffer his Friends to bring him food, and as difficult many times for him to get water to drink; in all which trials and exercises the Lords presence was not wanting to him, which made all these trials seem joyous unto

him; it was not long after but the said Goaler died. After him came *John Moorcock* to have some rule, though but a Servant in the Prison, unto whom *L. Letchford* wrote a Letter, to stir him up against the said *Ambros*, giving the flattering titles of Master *Moorcock*, who being of as bad and wicked spirit as himself, was easily induced by him to cruelty; in answer to which the said *Moorcock*, about the 8th hour at night, in the depth of the next Winter, made a mutiny in the Town of *Horsham*, pretending the *Quakers* had broke out of Prison, and raised a great Company with Clubs and Staves, and brought them up to the upper Ward where *Ambros* was at work, and without any occasion given them, they seised upon him, pulling and haling him down stairs into the lower Ward, among the Fellons, where *Moorcock* himself put great Irons upon him, and left him in that condition many dayes and nights, which continued so long as the said *Moorcock* continued in any Office in the Prison; and when *Letchford* saw that would not do his business, he writ a grievous Letter to the Sheriff against *Ambros*, and spurr'd up the Magistrates against him, who were more wise then to give much ear unto him, though he could never justly lay any thing to *Ambros*'s charge, that he had either wronged the King or any man upon the earth; but only because he would not break the Command of Christ to Swear; whom the said *Letchford* often threatned with the Gallows, both in word and writing, and sought many wayes to bring it to pass; but hitherto the Lord hath chained him by his mighty Power, glory and praise be unto his name for ever.

And when he saw that all these devices and strategems failed him, he pretends to have Tythes due from *Ambros* his Wife, against whom he imployed several rude Bailiffs; and when they did not prosecute her to his mind, he turned Bailiff himself, and joyned himself to a rude, swearing, bruitish Fellow, who, with himself, pursued *Ambros* his wife, till they took her, who caused her to be set upon the Bailiffs Saddle, and with mocking and jearing sent her along in the mans Saddle to *Horsham* Prison to her Husband; and at the Assizes got two of his kindred to swear falsly against her, whereby he proved eight pounds due to him from her, as he pretended, for the levelling of which, he the said *Lechford*, hearing that *Ambros* and his Wife had hired a Room or two, and had some Goods for their necessary use in *Horsham*, sent four Bailiffs, who entred into the

said

said Rooms in *Leonard Letchfords* name, with an Execution in the name of *Mary Luxford*, who brake, and spoiled, and robbed the said *Ambros Rigge* of Goods to the value of thirty pounds; yea, they carried away *Ambros*'s proper goods, which he bought for his use in the Prison several years before, leaving not so much as a Bed to lie upon in the Winter season; which goods aforesaid, *Robert Ryde* Bailiff of *Horsham* sold, at his own price and time, of which he would never render any Account, though he was often required, and several times promised he would; but the last time he was sent unto, he sent word, that he must have more goods for *Letchford* from *Ambros*; and afterward one of *Horsham* asked *Ambros*, if *Letchford* had not robbed him of more Goods? saying, that *Letchford* was heard to say, that he would never leave off till he had undone *Ambros*; which though the party was one of his own Judgment, could not but condemn him herein.

Afterwards, this *Letchford* hearing that the King was like to take some pity of *Ambros*, with many others, who had suffered many years strait & close imprisonment, having nothing to charge them with, but obedience to the Commands of Christ; he, with others, not unknown, stirred up all the power they could, and got several hands to sign a Paper, representing *Ambros* to the King, a turbulent Ring-leader of the Sect of the *Quakers*, and a Stranger in the Country, and not fitting to have liberty, thinking thereby to strengthen his Bonds by these aggravations. Oh, that all who had any hand in this wicked Return, may find repentance thereof before they go hence, lest it stand recorded against them in the day of Account; for it was the same spirit that accused *Paul* to *Felix*, *Act* 24. 5. who said, they found him a pestilent Fellow, a mover of Sedition among all the Jews throughout the World, and a Ring-leader of the Sect of the *Nazarens*: the same spirit also called the Lord of Life, the Prince of Devils; and the Servant is not greater then his Lord; for if they have called the Master of the House *Beelzebub*, how much more them of his houshold. And this Priest, *Nebuchadnezzar*-like, hath caused the Furnace to be heat seven times hotter, then for false Swearers, who is but to remain a year in Prison; but seven years imprisonment is accounted too little by him, for those who cannot Swear at all, to break the Command of Christ; good were it for such Persecutors of the Innocent, that their Cradles had been

their

their Graves; for then had not the cry of Oppression followed them to Judgement, which in every Age of the World was the overthrow of the Oppressors, and pulled down the Wrath of God upon their heads; and if they were to go into everlasting punishment, in the dayes of Christ, that did not visit and refresh the least of his Servants in Prison, what will become of them that sends Robbers to take away the goods of the Servants of Christ which they provided to supply their wants in Prison? such actions is scarcely heard of among the Heathens: Is this the way to convince gainsayers? did ever either Christ or any of his Ministers use this way of gathering the lost Sheep of *Israel*; though he had all Power in Heaven and Earth given him, that he might rule all Nations with a Rod of Iron? were ever Prisons, Gibbets, Stocks, Fire or Faggot to restrain or destroy the Bodies of the worst of Hereticks, ever used or commanded to be used by Christ or any of his Ministers on Earth? you who so much pretend the Scripture to be your Rule; what Examples have you therein of these things from the Ancient and true Christians? but is not the Heathen Kings and Emperors, both in the Scriptures, and the several Popes, and their Antichristian Clergy, since the Scriptures were written, your patern for these things? If you could prove those to be in Error whom you so falsly accuse, the way that you take with them would but more harden them therein; for it is a great dishonour to a Christian Nation to oppress and abuse the worst Infidel in the World.

And have not you kept some of the Servants of Christ in Prison well nigh seven years, whom you have judged Deceivers? now since their commitment and confinement, how often have you sent your Ministers to convince them? Is not your whole Flock of Clergy able to do it? If you had had the least love to their Souls you would have travelled and laboured night and day, by sound Doctrine and Arguments, to have put to silence the ignorance of the foolish and deceived, if you could have proved them such; if you had warred with them with the Sword of the Spirit; *viz. The Word of God*, and have defended your selves by that, we should have believed you had been sent of God, and guided by his Spirit, but we see you are short of the Papists, who are gross Idolaters, for before they delivered those they counted Hereticks to the Secular Power to be punished, they sent their Priests often to admonish

nish them, and to convince them by Arguments. From all these your proceedings we are bold to conclude, that if there were no more Tythes and great Benefices in your Parishes to be reaped, then there is at *Horsham* Goal, you would be as seldom seen there, as you were in the Prison aforesaid, and have as little care over your Flocks, as you have of them there. Oh, that you would consider what you are a doing, before it be too late; for the Spirit of the Lord will not alwayes strive with you; large hath been the day of your Visitation, which you have most grievously abused: The *Jews* chief Priests did think they had done well when they persecuted the Servants of Christ, who had more colour of Scripture for what they did, then you have; therefore are ye more inexcusable before the Lord.

R. T.

THE END.

THE END.

XUM